

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing amendment, Claims 1-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 7 and 8 are amended by the present amendment. Figure 19 is also amended to remove a pair of empty parentheses from that figure. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-7 and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Applicants' Background Art (hereinafter "ABA")¹ in view of European Patent No. 0991051 to Arimoto; and Claim 8 was indicated as allowable.

Applicants note, with appreciation, the indication of allowable subject matter. Applicants and Applicants' representative also thank Examiner Nguyen for granting the interview conducted on October 25, 2004. During the interview, Applicants' representative noted differences between the features of Claims 1, 5, and 9 and the teachings of ABA in view of Arimoto. In view of those differences, which are set forth below, Examiner Nguyen agreed that Claims 1, 5, and 9 distinguish over ABA in view of Arimoto.

Applicants further note that Arimoto is not 35 U.S.C. 102(a), (b), or (c) prior art, because Arimoto is not a printed publication whose authorship differs from the inventive entity of the present application;² was not published more than one year prior to the present application's PCT filing date of May 15, 2000; and was not issued on a U.S. or PCT patent application filed by another inventive entity. Arimoto and the present application are based on JP 10-276982 and JP 10-276735, respectively. For the above reasons, those references are not prior art, as well.

¹ The outstanding Office Action characterizes several of Applicants' figures as "prior art". Those figures, which were previously amended to include the legend "Background Art", are not admitted "prior art".

² See MPEP 2132.01.

As stated, even assuming *arguendo* that Arimoto was prior art, the features of Claims 1-7 and 9-11 are nonetheless patentable over ABA in view of Arimoto for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 is directed to a method for driving a display panel including, *inter alia*: supplying a common electrode with a reset pulse opposite in polarity to a display pulse, the reset pulse for inversion of charges stored on the common electrode; and supplying the common electrode with a first single-step pulse of the same polarity as the display pulse. In a non-limiting example, Applicants' Figure 5 illustrates an embodiment of the claimed invention. As shown, a reset pulse and a first single-step pulse are applied to the common electrode. The single-step pulse may be formed from the simultaneous application of a first voltage pulse and a second voltage pulse superimposed thereon.³ The outstanding Office Action cites Applicants' Figure 18 as disclosing the features of Claim 1, with the exception of the first single-step pulse; and cites Arimoto Figures 9 and 11 as teaching the first single-step pulse.⁴ However, Arimoto's Figures 9 and 11 disclose a two-step pulse (i.e. not a one-step pulse). Thus, those figures do not teach or suggest the claimed single-step pulse of the same polarity as the display pulse.

Claim 5 is directed to a method for driving a display panel including, *inter alia*: transferring data, for controlling a period of gaseous discharge in one of plural display cells, to drive a circuit of a discrete electrode substantially when no voltage is applied to a common electrode. In a non-limiting example, Applicants' Figure 10 illustrates an embodiment of the claimed invention. As shown, a data transfer period of 10 μ s (see shaded area) is applied between application of display pulses to the common electrode. The outstanding Office

³ Specification, page 17, lines 9-13.

⁴ Applicants note that the outstanding Office Action characterizes several of Applicants' figures as "prior art". Those figures, which were previously amended to include the legend "Background Art", are addressed without admission that such figures are prior art.

Action cites Applicants' Figures 18 and 19 as teaching the features of the claimed invention. However, those figures do not teach or suggest the claimed step of transferring data when no voltage is applied to a common electrode.

Amended Claim 7 is directed to a method for driving a display panel including, *inter alia*: applying a stabilization sequence in which at least one display pulse is applied to the common electrode to perform a stabilizing gaseous discharge of each of the plural display cells.⁵ In a non-limiting example, Figure 13 illustrates an embodiment of the claimed invention. As shown, a stabilizing sequence is applied to the common electrode. The stabilization sequence causes a repeated discharge emission to bring all cells into a more stable state that reduces false discharge.⁶ The outstanding Office Action does not address the feature of a stabilizing sequence applied to each of the plural display cells. Further, neither Applicants' background art nor Arimoto teaches or suggests the claimed stabilization sequence.

Claim 9 is directed to a method for driving a display panel including, *inter alia*: controlling a period of gaseous discharge in one of plural display cells by controlling a period in which to apply a display pulse to a common electrode and in which to apply a discharge suppression pulse to a discrete electrode. The outstanding Office Action cites Arimoto's Figure 12 and paragraphs 47 and 48 as teaching the claimed controlling step. However, Arimoto's Figure 12 merely discloses a single display cell; and the cited paragraphs do not teach or suggest a discharge suppression pulse.

Accordingly, for the above stated reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-7 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over ABA in view of Arimoto be withdrawn.

⁵ For support, see Specification, Figures 13 and 14 (and corresponding description).

⁶ Specification, page 22, lines 3-10.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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